THE

Lay-Man's Religion:

Humbly offered as a HELP to a

MODEST ENQUIRY

For every Man into his own Heart; both as being the only Means to judge and save himself, and the best way to unite us all against our Common Enemies.

The Second Edition.

Psal. 16. 2, 3. *O my Soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, my* Goodness *extendeth not unto thee: But unto the Saints which are in the Earth, and to the* Excellent, *in whom is all my delight.*

Psal. 119. 15. *Depart from me ye Evil-doers: for I will keep the Commandments of my God.*

LONDON,

Printed by *Eliz. Holt* for *Walter Kettilby*, at the *Bishop's-Head* in St. *Paul's Church-Yard*, in the Year 1690.

Licenfed,

November 13.
1690.

THE

CONTENTS.

AS our Diviſions, Animoſities, and Immoralities have ariſen from uncharitable Cenſuring of one another; ſo nothing can heal or remove them, but impartial judging our ſelves, before we cenſure our Neighbour. Page 5.

The pure Love of God, and a meek Spirit, have ever decayed with the increaſe of Knowledge, when 'tis not guarded with profound Humility. ib.

Inordinate purſuit of Ambition and worldly Deſign, is equally Moral Idolatry *with the ſame Sin, in ſenſual Pleaſures, and lower Enjoyments.* p. 6.

To the end every Man may diſcover his own, we may diſtinguiſh our crying Sins, (the Cauſe of our Calamities) under Three Heads.

1. Avarice, *or* Inordinate Love of the World.
2. Debauchery, *and* Immorality.
3. Ambition, Pride, *and* Worldly Deſign. p. 7.

1. Self-Love *the Fountain of all Evil. Love of our ſelves, inclines us to wiſh lower Enjoyments might not hinder Happineſs hereafter, and to think Saints ought to rule, rather than Sinners. The Inconſiſtency between the love of God and Mammon. The true Cauſe why all our Comforts here below, ebb and flow with the fading Nature of the Object of our Love. Real Happineſs centres in God alone.* p. 8.

The wretched State of the covetous Worldling, whoſe God is of a periſhing Nature. p. 11.

2. *Of* Debauchery *and* Immorality. *ib.*

Such as do not comply with outward Acts of Piety and Devotion, but give themſelves up to Senſuality, ought not to be reckoned among Profeſſors. ib.

Of the Drunkard, *the profane* Swearer, *and the* unclean Perſon; *a brief Diſcourſe of each, as of the worſt of Men; uncapable of Truſt, or Office in the Government; cannot be good Soldiers, as uncapable of true Courage, or good Conduct.* p. 12, 13, 14.

The Contents.

Of the Doctrine and Discipline of our National Church: *The chief Cause and Continuance of* Separation *arises from Scandal of some of our Clergy, and Immorality of some of our Members, which is the Case of the Gospel it self: The Removal of this, the proper* Medium *of* Uniformity. p. 15.

Of the great Evil from bad Example of Magistrates, Parents, and Masters of Families, and neglect in their Duty: The Ruine of Posterity threatned thereby. p. 16.

Reformation of Manners (the only Cure) must begin in their own Pattern and Example. p. 18.

3. *Of the great Danger and Evil of* Ambition *and* Worldly Design, *under the Vizor of* Zeal for Reformation, *and of* Liberty of Conscience, *and the Extent of it, as the Christians Birthright; and of the great abuse of it, by designing and ambitious Persons, who, under that Umbrage, seek Dominion and Rule.* p. 21.

The Result of all, in a Modest Enquiry *how far* Separation, *or* Indulgence *hath wrought for the better. And the proper, and only* Medium *of our Healing and Cure propounded, enforced by Arguments from the greatest Examples and Instances.* p. 24.

How the ill Managery *of the* Tongue, *or the* bad Husbandry *of our* Time, *will render all* Religion vain. p. 32.

The Author's Apology in a Post-script.

THE

The Author's Humble *Dedication, Appeal,* and *Addreſs.*

O *Moſt Gracious God, the Creator and Suſteiner of all things, Thou alone art the Fountain of* Being *and* Happineſs, *to whom all things are eternally known, and from whom no ſecret can be hid; thou calleſt the things that are not, as if they were; and by the weakeſt means, canſt effect thy greateſt Deſigns. Lord, thou knoweſt my aim and end in theſe my weak Endeavours, and the Motives from whence I have made them publick: How earneſtly I have laboured (ſince, through thy Grace I have turned my back on Folly) after a ſatisfactory Reſt to my anxious Mind. And how unwearied I have been by an impartial Enquiry into the various ways of Religious Worſhip, which (though but Shadows in Religion) are ſo much inſiſted upon by Men of different Perſuaſions, to cauſe Separation from our National Communion: In which (if I underſtand it right) no more ſtreſs is laid on any Rite or Ceremony, than Decency and Order do require.*

O my God, thou who art the ſearcher of Hearts, and by thine all-ſeeing Eye (as in open day) thou diſcerns the moſt ſecret Deſigns of Men; thou knoweſt what ill uſe hath been made of theſe Fig-leaves of external Profeſſion, *by* ſubtil *and* deſigning *Perſons, under pretence of* Liberty of Conſcience, *and* Zeal for Reformation, *to ſeparate from our Publick Eſtabliſhed Diſcipline into a pretended* purer Worſhip, *thereby to impoſe upon, and miſguide the moſt ſincere, and well meaning Chriſtians, to implant themſelves into ſeparate and gathered Churches, (as into a more ſecure Ark of Salvation) only to ſerve their own Turns, and to promote their own private Intereſt in their Worldly Deſign; from whence our unhappy Di-*

viſions

viſions have ariſen, and Sects like Locuſts have encreaſed, to the great ſcandal and Offence of ſuch as are willing to do, or ſuffer any thing to be ſafe, and to the hindring many others from returning, who might have continued holy and happy Pillars in our Publick Communion, to the Advancement of thy Glory, in the Harmony and Tranquillity of the whole Kingdom.

I do moſt humbly acknowledge thy infinite Goodneſs towards me, for the gracious guidance of thy Spirit, in diſpoſing my Heart, when I had examined and enquired into all other Perſuaſions, then to fix and join in that Communion, where I am fully perſuaded I may ſerve thee moſt acceptably, agreeable to thine own revealed Will, and where I may moſt benefit my Fellow-Creatures, to my Comfort here, in order to my eternal Felicity.

O my God, thou knoweſt how I have endeavoured in the Simplicity of my Heart, to make known to others, what thou haſt in Mercy diſcovered to me, and done for me, in ſparing me as a Monument of thy Mercy, and a Miracle of the Age I live in; having no other Cauſe to aſſign why I ſurvive my Companions in Evil, but that I ſhould at my Peril explode that unmanning Sin of Drunkenneſs *and* Intemperance, *and warn* all others *to ſhun, hate, and forſake it, as the* Parent *and* Nurſe *of* Vice, Immorality *and* Debauchery, *the* monſtrous Bane *of* Humanity, *and* blaſt *of all* Religion; *as it eclipſes* Reaſon, (*the Sun in Man's little World,*) *rendring* Men below Brutes, careleſs *and* ſenſeleſs *of their* Duty *to* Thee, *their* Fellow-Creatures, *and* themſelves; *bold and daring in* bare-faced Impiety, *more* barbarous and cruel than Tygers to their own Fleſh and Blood; *and in the dreadful Conſequence, without Repentance,* Butchers *and* Murtherers *of their own* Souls, *as well as of their* Poſterity.

O Lord, in Mercy behold this ſinful, divided, and diſtracted Kingdom; and by thine Almighty Power, put a ſtop to that ſpreading Hypocriſie, Atheiſm, *and* Immorality, *which every where abounds among us. Encreaſe the number of holy, learned,*

ned, and painful Paſtors in this our National Church; and in thy gracious Wiſdom, over-rule, order, and diſpoſe the Minds of all that are fitly qualified for that high and holy Calling, that they may join in that Communion, as the ſureſt and tried Bulwark againſt Popery, the beſt Prop and Support of our Monarchical Government; and which (whilſt it continued at Unity, and in Harmony of Worſhip) was the Beauty and Glory of the Reformation, and the Sanctuary for all diſtreſſed Proteſtants. Woe be to thoſe ſubtil Foxes (the Jeſuit and Sectary) that have been ſo long endeavouring to undermine and ſupplant it, in poiſoning it with Error and falſe Doctrine; and pulling down its Fences, to make way for the wild Boar, the practical Atheiſts and Debauchee, to root up, and choak all its ſacred Seeds with Profaneſs and Senſuality.

Awaken, and convince (O Lord) all ſcandalous, ignorant, and ſlothful Clergy, and all profane, and vitious Magiſtrates, and Members of our Communion, with a dreadful apprehenſion of the Woes pronounced againſt all that cauſe ſuch Offences, whereby thy ways are evil ſpoken of, and our holy and pure Religion reproached and deſpiſed by our Enemies round about us.

O Lord, I beſeech thee (ſo far as it conſiſts with thy Holy Will) proſper, and ſucceed my honeſt Deſign in this Work: Open the Eyes, and undeceive all thoſe, who agree our Doctrine (the Subſtance in our Eſtabliſhed Religion) to be pure, and yet do ſeparate from it into ſo many different Perſuaſions, (the Shell and Shadows of Religion,) to increaſe our Heats and Diviſions, and lay us open (as a Prey) to our Enemies. Do thou, O Lord, by thine own over-ruling Grace, encline and diſpoſe them, to return into the boſom of this our Church, that by good Living *in one Communion, we may all win, and work one upon another, by brotherly Kindneſs and watchful Love, as the moſt likely means to heal all our Diviſions, and to effect an univerſal Reformation among us, by reſtoring that* Piety, Sobriety, *and* Righteouſneſs *in Chriſtian Charity, and Harmony of Divine Worſhip, which for ſo many years kept up a*

venerable

venerable Awe of thy Holy Majesty in the Minds of Men, and rendered Religion amiable in this Kingdom.

O blessed Redeemer, thine own Pattern, whilst thou didst converse with Men, is the fairest Copy we can write after, and thine own Precepts and Counsels, our surest Guide and Instruction: Thou didst both teach and practise Meekness, Humility, *and* Self-denial, *as the surest Touch-stone of thy true Religion; and pure, and unmercenary, and impartial Love, and tender Compassion, towards all that bore the Aspect of Humanity. Thou hast made the knowledge of our Duty easie and plain, to all that will hear thy Voice, and attend to thy Teaching, though subtil Deceivers (for Worldly Design) labour to render it dark and difficult: But both the Deceivers, and the (willingly) deceived, shall one day justifie thee as righteous in their Condemnation, that if they perish, it is because they would not, and not because they could not cross and resist their own corrupt Will, to comply with thy Holy Will, according to what they knew, or might have known, in order to their own Happiness.*

Grant, O thou Conductor of Souls, that we may all, through thy Grace, steer our whole Christian Course, by this thine own unerring Compass of Truth, between the two Extremes of Pride, Ambition, *and* Worldly Design, *and* Atheism, Debauchery *and* Immorality, *through* Jesus Christ our Lord; *to whom with thy* Holy Majesty *and blessed* Spirit, Three Glorious Relations *in one* God, *be Glory and Praise for ever.* Amen.

THE

THE LAY-MAN's RELIGION,

In an affectionate *Epiſtle* to all *Mankind*.

Pſal. 30. 3. *O Lord, thou haſt brought up my ſoul from the* Grave: *thou haſt kept me alive, that I ſhould not go down to the Pit.*
Pſal. 6. 16. *Come and hear all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my ſoul.*

AS there is nothing hath more occaſioned, and increaſed our Heats, Diviſions and Animoſities, than the raſh and uncharitable Cenſures, which Men of differing Perſuaſions are apt to paſs one upon another, to the great ſcandal of Religion, and encouragement of Debauchery and Immorality: So nothing in the World can ſooner heal our Breaches, reform our Manners, and unite us all among our ſelves, than an impartial Scrutiny by every Man into his own Heart and Life; ſo as firſt to give Sentence at home upon himſelf, before he adventures to cenſure or judge his Neighbour.

It is a manifeſt Truth (but a lamentable one,) That as *the pure Love of God*, and *a meek Spirit* have, ever ſince Man's Fall, decayed with the increaſe of Knowledge in the generality of Mankind; great Knowledge not guarded with profound Humility, rendering Man but more like the Devil: So from the beginning of Chriſtianity, *Pride* and *Self-love* have always in a gradual Courſe joſtled out *Truth* and *Goodneſs* where-ever it hath been planted, and turned the vital part of Religion into *Sophiſtry* and *Diſpute*, which begets Quarrels in Profeſſors about *Shadows* and *Circumſtantials*, whilſt they neglect the Subſtance in good Living, thereby baniſhing *Chriſtian Charity*, to make way for *Intereſt* and worldly Deſign, though under a ſpecious Vizor of *Zeal* for *Reformation*.

Now as we all agree, 'tis more eaſie to know than practiſe; ſo we muſt all allow, that when Men's Actions run counter to their Words, (though never ſo charming,) it renders their Advice (in a great meaſure) ineffectual to others, becauſe they do not follow

it themselves. This made St. *Paul* so careful of himself, lest while he was preaching to others, he might become a Cast-away. And that others might doe so too, he left as a standing Rule, his Advice to all, to have a peculiar regard to their own inbred, and habitual Evil, as that Clog which hinders us all in our Christian Course. Heb. 12. 1. *Let us* (saith he) *lay aside every weight, and the Sin which doth so easily beset us*, that we may the better run our Race after our Redeemer's Pattern.

By God's Grace, I am a Witness from my own Experience of this sad Truth, having been a Spectator of the many Revolutions of late among us, and one of the greatest Instances of the Divine Goodness the present Age affords, for this very end, that I should hang out my Experience, for a Light to warn others from farther adventuring, either in a false Persuasion of Religion to secular ends, or in the Practice of any known Sin: And therefore,

I have here adventured to publish my weak Endeavours (as a *Lay-man's Religion*) to awaken and quicken all others, whether Professors, or Profane, to leave off all farther pursuit of Shadows, and to embrace the * real Substance, that both may forsake their Idols, and return to God, from whence all such are fallen.

For though the Object of Men's *Love* and *Delight* may be different, as the one is in extreme opposite to the other, according to their different Inclination and natural Dispositions; yet both are equally guilty of Moral Idolatry, as the one pursues inordinate Ambition, and worldly Design, and the other sensual Pleasures, or lower Enjoyments; both equally robbing God of that *Love*, *Complacency*, and *Delight*, which we all owe him, as the Fountain of Good, and supreme Author of our Being.

* *O Vitæ Philosophia Dux*
O Virtutum Indagatrix vitiorumq;
Expultrix!
unus dies benè & ex præceptis tuis actus, Mille in peccato actis diebus est anteponendus, Cic. Who would not be Religious, were he once convinced that true *Pleasure*, and real *Happiness* (which all desire) are alone to be found in a *pious*, *sober* and *vertuous* Life. O thou only *Paradise* on Earth! well might the holy Prophet solemnly avouch *One day in thy Courts, is better than a thousand elsewhere*, Psal. 84. 10.

This I shall endeavour to demonstrate in the following Discourse.

THE primary Cause of all our Evils is Sin; and to find out this Truth, we must trace it to its Original, in our first Parents Disobedience; whose Foot-steps we now tread in, when we sin after the Similitude of their Transgression, (that is) against Knowledge and Means. Their Sin was Disobedience to their known Duty, in dis-believing Truth it self, and giving Credit to the Father of Lies; forsaking God the Fountain of Good, to seek their Happiness in the Creature; by which they, and all their Posterity for ever lost Paradise in this World, and all Right and Property (farther than as Stewards accountable) in all we possess here below.

This

This is a Truth owned by all, but ſuch as are Strangers to God and themſelves; and which none can deny, but ſuch as are wilfully ignorant of God's revealed Will in the Scriptures, and unacquainted with their own inward Frame, the proper Schools for this Diſcipline.

For God hath placed in every Man's Breaſt the flaming Sword of Reaſon and Conſcience, to hinder his inordinate purſuit of Happineſs here below, and to chaſe him out of all hope of ever returning back to his earthly Paradiſe, or finding any real Satisfaction for that infinite Principle of Love and Deſire (which is the Radical Affection of his Nature) in theſe lower Enjoyments.

So that the Diſorder we feel within us, and all the external Miſery that befals us from the Creatures (as Inſtruments of God's Juſtice) without us, are but the effects of our Diſobedience; and in Love deſigned for our Correction, to awaken us out of our ſenſual Security, and cauſe us to * return from purſuit of Vanity in the Creature, to God the Fountain of Happineſs from whence we fell.

Now foraſmuch as all Mankind (ſince the Fall) are naturally blind to themſelves, and partial in judging of God's Dealings with them, ever willing to excuſe themſelves: And as they follow their firſt Parents Steps in Rebellion; ſo when they ſuffer, are too apt (with them) to transfer the blame on others; *The Woman thou gaveſt me*, cries *Adam*; and when ſhe was charged, *The Serpent beguiled me*, was her Evaſion. And ſo to lay the Cauſe of all our Miſery at ſome other Door; which is in effect, to throw back all on God, as if he cauſed what he doth not prevent.

I ſhall endeavour briefly here to demonſtrate, that every Man, (Saint or Sinner, *Phariſee* or *Publican*,) of what Perſuaſion ſoever he be, that doth not firſt look home into his own Heart, ſo as ſeriouſly to conſider his own Ways, and judge himſelf, doth ſtill ſhare in the procuring Cauſe, which hath brought all theſe Evils upon us.

And that I may convince every Man of the Truth of this, I ſhall endeavour briefly to ſhew what are thoſe crying Sins that have cauſed all thoſe Judgments (which we either feel or fear,) that every man may the better judge himſelf how far he ſtands guilty before God and his own Conſcience therein. And thoſe Sins may be comprehended under theſe Three Heads.

I. *Avarice*; or, an inordinate Purſuit of *Mammon*.

II. *Debauchery* and *Immorality*.

III. *Ambition*, *Pride*, and *Worldly Deſign*.

* *Converſion* is nothing elſe but *ceaſing to do evil*, by thus *turning* from *Satan* to *God* in newneſs of Life. Which, in its effect, is *Repentance* from dead works; and *Saving Faith* is when we do both, from a firm Belief of God's Truth, in his *Threatnings* againſt *Sin*, and in his *Promiſes* to reward *Obedience*, ſo as from thence to purifie our ſelves for his Service here, in order to partake of his Glory hereafter.

I ſhall begin with *Self-Love*, the Fountain of all Evil, as that which includes all the reſt; and in the firſt place diſcourſe of *Avarice*, or *Inordinate Love of the World.*

WEre I poſſeſs'd of the whole World, or the greateſt ſhare in it, I ſhould be happy or miſerable only, according to the *good* or *ill* Uſe I made of all I poſſeſs'd. It has been the great miſtake of many wiſe Men in all Ages, to account themſelves *Proprietors* of what *God* conſigns to them in *Truſt*, as *Stewards* only, for the Good of the great Family of Mankind, whether it be *Riches*, *Honours*, *Power*, or *Endowments of the Mind:* And when Men thus eſteem all they poſſeſs their own, they aſſume to themſelves God's Title therein, and from thence naturally draw this Inference, That *they may do with their own what they pleaſe*; either keep their Wealth locked up in a Cheſt, or lay it out according to their own Humour and Fancy; in building a delightful Palace, and pulling it down, when they have done; in the purchaſe of empty Titles of Honour; or in prodigally treating and obliging the Grandees of the World; or laviſhly conſuming it in *Luxury* and *Senſuality.*

And being thus miſerably miſtaken in their Reckonings, they value themſelves by the abundance they poſſeſs, not conſidering that their great Revenue, as well as their Health, Time, and Opportunities increaſe their Care, as *Talents* of which they muſt give a ſtrict Accompt; and as they hoarded up, or ſacrificed them to their vain Glory, or Pleaſure in their Life-time; ſo, when they die, (ſtill reckoning all their own) they uſually diſpoſe of what they have left to others, who being equally Slaves to their own Paſſions, either follow the ſame foot-ſteps of immoderate ſcraping together, or elſe prove as great Vaſſals to the like inordinate Deſires in ſcattering, as they (that went before) were in gathering, (for in both, *Mammon* is the commanding Power or Deity,) each ſeeking that Satisfaction from the finite Enjoyments of this World, (wherein the Shadow only of the Divine Excellency is ſcattered,) which can be no where found below God himſelf, the Fountain and Original of all Perfection; who, like the beloved Pole to its Needle, can alone give reſt to Man's boundleſs and immortal Appetite.

Thus have I known great Eſtates gotten and ſpent within the compaſs of my own Memory; as the one from a ſmall beginning rolled together his Mole-hill of Wealth, ſo nothing remains of his prodigal Succeſſor's, ſave only this infallible Truth, That both *laboured in vain for ſatisfaction in that which cannot ſatisfie.*

It

It is eaſie to know theſe Truths, but only difficult for ſuch to practiſe, who have not yet throughly learned that (ſeeming hard) Leſſon of *Self-denial*, and the *Croſs*, the firſt terrible Blow to Fleſh and Blood, and Touch-ſtone of true Religion; which our Saviour makes an Indiſpenſable requiſite to the very Being of his Diſciples, though it ſeems *an hard Saying* to them that have not ſo learned Chriſt.

Our *Love to our ſelves* eaſily inclines us to believe, (at leaſt, to wiſh in our Hearts,) That the Happineſs and Glory of the World to come, might conſiſt with a full Enjoyment of our Portion alſo in this Life; which renders all thoſe Doctrines ſo pleaſing and agreeable, that do allow Saints a greater Right than Sinners in the Riches, Dominion and Government of the World, though this be quite contrary to what our Saviour himſelf taught, when he declared the Love and Service of *God* and *Mammon* (or the World) to be inconſiſtent in one and the ſame *Worſhipper*, as irreconcileable as *Heaven* and *Hell*, for that the one is in direct oppoſition to the other. Our *Love* to *God* aſpires upwards, towards him, as the *Centre* of our *Reſt*, and the only *Happineſs* our Souls do thirſt after: Our *Love* of *Mammon* (or the World) is groveling downwards to the Earth, and always *centres* in *our ſelves*, but never quiet; inſatiably *deſiring*, though never *ſatisfied*. For our *Soul* is an *eternal Principle*, and cannot feed on *fading Enjoyments*: *Goodneſs* it ſelf is her proper *Food*, of which all the *World* is but a faint *Shadow*. The *Love* of *Mammon* craves *ſenſible Good*; but the *Love* of *God* begs rather *the Light of his Countenance*. Pſal. 4. 6, 7.

This is the Reaſon why all our Comforts in theſe lower Enjoyments are never certain, but do ever ebb and flow, according to the fading Nature of the Object wherein we ſeek our Happineſs, (whether it be *Riches*, *Honours*, or *Pleaſures*;) all which, like Weeds, that ſeem Flowers to Senſe, yield nothing but Emptineſs and Vanity to the Mind, and do always end in Vexation of Spirit. Which is a plain Demonſtration, that it is impoſſible for the Soul of Man to find true Reſt or Satisfaction in this outward World, till ſhe return (by inward retiring of the Mind) *home to God*, *from whom ſhe firſt fell*, as the living Fountain of *Good*. How pathetically does *David* bear witneſs to this Truth, by his own inward Experience in *Pſal.* 63. *O God, thou art my God, early will I ſeek thee: My Soul thirſteth for thee, my Fleſh longeth for thee, in a dry and thirſty Land, where no Water is, to ſee thy Power and thy* *Glory, *ſo as I have ſeen thee in the Sanctuary: Becauſe thy Loving Kindneſs is better than Life, my Lips ſhall praiſe thee:*

* By this external Glory in the Sanctuary, we are now to underſtand the *Internal Beauty of Holineſs*, which, by intellectual View, we behold from our Contemplation in the inward Temple of our Minds; reflecting on the Purity of Gods Worſhip, in the Aſſembly of his Saints.

thee: Thus will I bleſs thee while I live, and will lift up my hands in thy Name: My Soul ſhall be ſatisfied, as with Marrow and Fatneſs; and my Mouth ſhall praiſe thee with joyful Lips, when I remember thee on my Bed, and meditate on thee in the Night-Watches; becauſe thou haſt been my Help; therefore in the Shadow of thy Wings will I rejoyce.

Now, forasmuch as ſuch an holy Frame of Spirit is purely wrought by God's Grace, ſo it is our Duty in an humble manner to pray for it; and God, who is faithful in all, hath promiſed to beſtow it on them that diligently and ſincerely ſeek it.

And I wiſh every Member of private Congregations, who are ſo apt to be puffed up with an over-weening Conceipt of their own Ability, as to think themſelves above all ſet Forms of Prayer, were ſo convinced of their own Ignorance and Weakneſs, as to make uſe of this one *Collect* in our *Church-Liturgy*, for their Eaſe and Help herein.

O Almighty God, who alone canſt order the unruly Wills and Affections of ſinful Men, Grant unto thy People, that they may love the thing which thou doſt command, and deſire that which thou doſt promiſe; that ſo, among the ſundry and manifold Changes of this World, our Hearts may ſurely there be fixed, where true Joys are to be found; through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.

To which I ſhall ſubjoyn but this one ſhort Prayer, as another part of the ſame *Liturgy*; which here followeth.

ALmighty God, unto whom all Hearts be open, and all Deſires known, and from whom no Secrets are hid; cleanſe the Thoughts of our Hearts by the Inſpiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, *and worthily magnifie thy holy Name; through Chriſt our Lord,* Amen.

And now I have mention'd the *Liturgy*, I humbly appeal to all charitable and well-diſpoſed Followers of the bleſſed Redeemer, (who have tried and examined it,) whether this plain and brief Form may not ſuit with the Capacity and Diſpoſition of the moſt Learned, and leaſt Knowing; the Phariſee, and the Publican; the ſoundeſt Believer, and the moſt ſcrupulous and tender Conſcience; ſo as they may all join together in their publick Devotion.

And whether there be in any other way of Worſhip, a Standard more agreeable to the Frame and Faculties of Man's Mind, than in our Liturgy eſtabliſhed among us, ſo as by frequent and ſolemn aſſembling themſelves together, they may thereby provoke, encourage, and diſpoſe one another to Union of Heart, and Harmony

in

in Divine Worſhip, as the higheſt Happineſs attainable (in Common) among Chriſtians in this World; though for a time the Caſe may be the ſame with them, as it was with me, and many others, to have an averſion to it, from the Miſrepreſentation of others, or want of a right apprehenſion of ſome things contained in it. But to return:

How miſerable a Creature then is the *Covetous Worldling*, who ſo little troubles himſelf with the things of Religion, or the World to come, that he feels no other *Hunger* or *Thirſt*, but after *Mammon*, or this World; being ſo poſſeſſed with the Love of it, that he hath no room left in his Heart for Love of any thing beſides? And whilſt he labours under the *Tyranny* of an *inſatiable Deſire* of more, he feels no Comfort in all that he doth enjoy, though he hugs his *Mammon* as his only God and Portion, the Object of all his Thoughts, Love, and Delight, till his Soul be ravith'd from him; leaving his *Body* and *Mammon* to periſh together.

And this is the firſt ſort of crying Sins, ariſing from *Self-Love*, or *Moral Idolatry*, in ſuch as ſeek Heaven and Happineſs in *Mammon* here below, judging and cenſuring all others but themſelves.

I ſhall now proceed to ſpeak of the Second; which is,

Debauchery and *Immorality.*

AND as for ſuch as have given themſelves up to *Senſuality* and *Debauchery*, ſo as not to wait upon the Poſts of Wiſdom's Doors, in a conſcientious and ſober Uſe of the Means; as, Reading, Hearing, Praying, converſing with themſelves alone, and with good Men, in order to be reformed; but are ſo far from deſiring or endeavouring to be reclaimed, that they are rather ready to offer violence to ſober Reproof, and to deride and ſcoff at all Advice and good Counſel: I ſay, ſuch as theſe, who are too apt to name themſelves Sons of the Church, ought not to be reckon'd among Profeſſors, (though our Adverſaries moſt uncharitably or deſignedly father too many of them upon us,) becauſe they do not own God's Livery in any viſible Acts of Piety and Devotion; but having deſperately ſhut their Eyes, and hardned their Hearts, do by their wilful Rebellion declare themſelves Enemies to God and all Religion: And that ſuch as theſe have been both the Cauſe, and Inſtruments to bring God's Judgments upon us, none can doubt; though they all, as haters of God and Goodneſs, are ever apt to vent

their

their Fury and Malice (when God's Hand is upon them) againſt the moſt righteous and innocent Perſons.

And I ſhall addreſs my ſelf to them, as they diſtinguiſh themſelves by their crying Abominations; and name but Three for all the reſt.

1. In that unmanning and brutiſh Sin of *Drunkenneſs*, the *Parent* and *Nurſe* of many other Sins, as it puts out the Lamp of *Reaſon*, Man's healthful Guide unto all *vertuous* Actions, and ſafe Pilot to ſhun *Vice*. This Sin diſpoſes Men to all that may be called wicked, to betray their *Prince*, their *Religion*, their *Country*, and all to ſerve their Luſts; for he that has abandon'd his *Reaſon*, and loſt all *Senſe* of *Honour* and *Shame*, is falſe to his own Soul, and can never be true to any thing elſe.

Nor is that Man's Crime leſs, whoſe Body and Brain can bear moſt: Nay, the Scripture pronounces the greateſt *Woe* againſt the *Mighty Drinker*, as a Murtherer of his Brethren, by provoking them beyond their ſtrength, to bear an equal part with him, in a moſt impious Abuſe of God's Creatures. In which ſervile Drudgery of Sin and Satan, he is a kind of *Felo de ſe*; he *conſumes his Time and Patrimony, his Parts, his Body and Soul, and ſo falls at laſt a Sacrifice to the Sin that he loves above all theſe, nay, above God himſelf.*

2. The *profane Swearer*, who ſo cheaply ſells his Soul to the Devil, for neither Pleaſure, Honour, nor Profit, the three Shadows of Good, wherewith he baits his Hook to incline Men to all other Sins beſides, is ſurely the worſt ſort of Prodigal in the World.

What Words can utter his prodigious Folly, and daring Impiety, who with bloody Oaths calls for Damnation without ceaſing, (when he is already under the Sentence,) as if he ſcorned the leaſt moment to prepare for his Execution?

Such a *deſperate Caitiff* had need go to *Tyburn* to learn Diſcipline of thoſe miſerable Criminals; who, though they have been all their Life unmindful of their latter end, being now ſenſible their Time is limited by Man, (and may be ſooner determined by God,) would make any Terms of better Obedience, if they might have but a time of Trial.

Certainly were not Men grown paſt feeling by long practice, they might tremble to think, that the ſame God who, in terrible Thunder, publiſhed Man's Duty in *Mount Sinai* in Ten Precepts, made no difference between the *Thief*, the *Murtherer*, and the *Swearer*: How deſperate then is the *common Swearer*, who can abſtain from *Robbing*, and *Killing*, for fear of being *hanged* by the Law of Man; yet dares blaſpheme the living God, the Law-giver of Heaven

Heaven and Earth, and ſtab his Redeemer with *bloody Oaths*, though he be already ſentenced (without Repentance) in Body and Soul unto *Hell-fire*.

3. The *Unclean Perſon*, eſpecially he that glories in his Shame; how wretchedly does he cheat himſelf in the *Object of his Love*, when he forſakes his *God*, the Fountain of his Being, and the moſt *amiable ſatisfying Good*, in exchange for a ſordid and inſatiable *Luſt*; tranſforming himſelf into a laſcivious Goat, to hug and careſs the poiſoned Carcaſe of his filthy Hag in loathſome Embraces; wallowing in the polluted Mire of impure and unchaſte Thoughts, till his Mind become the Den of Satan, and a Cage of unclean Birds.

Well might *Solomon* denominate the *Saint* and *Sinner*, by the Character of a *Wiſe Man*, and of a *Fool*, without any other Note of Diſtinction. How can he be accounted wiſe, that refuſes Counſel, and hates Knowledge? How can you be Chriſtians indeed, when by your Lives and Language you proclaim your ſelves your Redeemer's Enemies? You muſt meaſure your *Love* to God, by the Senſe you have of Evil. Never pretend to be Honourers of God, when you can be unconcerned at the higheſt Diſhonour done unto his Name, make a Mock of *Sin*, and divert your ſelf with the filthy Converſation of the Wicked.

To what a deſperate pitch are ye now grown, who can thus ſin without Recoil? You have now conquer'd a tender Mind, and can ridicule what is ſacred, and ſcoff at all that is ſerious; for * no Man was ever ſo extreamly wicked on a ſudden. Wonder O Heavens, and be aſtoniſhed O Earth! that a Chriſtian Age and Nation ſhould produce ſuch daring Rebels to an *holy God*, to pull down Vengeance on us all.

* Nemo repente fuit turpiſſimus. *Juv.*

Do but call in your Mind, and hear God's *Voice* by his Prophet, thus ſpeaking, *If I be a Father, where is mine Honour? If I be a Maſter, where is my Fear?* Mal. 1. 6. Let every Man examine and judge himſelf, how little ſhare God can have in his *Love*, when he ſeldom thinks of him, or never ſeeks after him, but when thoſe his Idols (or filthy Luſts, wherein he moſt delights) do fail him: For, according as Men's Comforts ebb and flow from theſe lower Enjoyments, ſo uſually God hears from them in their Danger, Want, and Miſery. And let any Man, in his Wits, ask himſelf the Queſtion, Whether he could bear with ſuch Ingratitude, and baſe Uſage from his Fellow-Creatures.

And to you, *Scarlet-Sinners*, I ſpeak, and dare not be ſilent: To you, the *Shame of our Religion and Government:* To you, the *Reproach* of our *Church and Nation*, and *Grief* of all *good Men*. How dare you call your ſelves *Chriſtians*, when you hate to be reformed?

You are the Peſt of the Kingdom wherein you live, infecting our Youth, the Seed of Poſterity. And as theſe crying Sins, by the Law of God, do render you moſt unworthy to ſhare in our *Civil Government*, ſo you, above all Men, are moſt unfit to be intruſted with any *Military Employment*; for we have found by woful Experience, that

Drunkards, Swearers, and Whoremongers can never be good Soldiers, as being uncapable of true Courage, and good Conduct; and therefore we may ſafely conclude,

Such as you are the worſt of Men, an horrid Scandal and Nuſance, but no way ſerviceable to your King and Country: The worſt of Soldiers in time of Danger, though fool-hardy in your Mirth and Jollity, thus highly to provoke your Maker.. In time of Peace you ſtifle your Conſcience, you ſilence it with your Curſes and Oaths, as Drums and Trumpets drown the Cries in a Battel; but in the Face of an Enemy, when you ſhould defend your Country, you tremble at Judgment to come; ſhunning the Danger, (as Malefactors do Execution, in hope of a Reprieve,) that you may have Time to repent, though the Kingdom periſh.

'Tis only the vertuous Man, and the ſober, that can be Men of Conduct and Reſolution, whoſe inward Teſtimony animates their Courage, by aſſuring them of their Reward, That if they live, they gain immortal Honour; if they die, their Life is a Sacrifice in defence of their Religion and Country.

All other Courage is either without rational Conduct, ariſing from the Ferment of Blood and Spirit, wherein Game-Cocks and Maſtiffs outdo the greateſt Heroes; or elſe it is fool-hardy Valour, ariſing perhaps from Brandy, or ſuch intoxicating Liquors, which operate into Frenzy, evaporate into frothy Folly, and expire in Drowzineſs and Stupidity.

And how unfit ſuch a Creature is for Conduct, or to look Death in the Face, when inward Guilt, and Reflection on paſt Folly, ſtrikes him with Horrour, and Apprehenſion of a future Judgment, none know better than his own Conſcience; which, when it ſhould animate his Courage, ſtrikes him with Terrour, and makes him a fearful Coward.

Conſider now, all you that thus force your ſelves againſt God's inward Teaching; it is no more than what the Heathen allowed to be * innate in every Man's Breaſt, and what your own Conſcience, if you give it leave to ſpeak, will witneſs to be true; nay, you will and muſt hear it on a *dying Bed*, or at a *ſhameful End*, (the juſt Reward of ſuch impious Folly.) It is continued Diſobedience to this

* Video meliora, proboque, Deteriora ſequor.

this inward Teaching (after long ſtriving with God's Spirit) breeds Deſpair, which often ends with the *Knife* and *Halter*, as a terrible Warning to all that ſurvive.

Dread therefore the Thoughts of Judgment to come, where the Worm that never dies, an eternal Anguiſh, ſhall, like a Vulture, gnaw upon your wounded Spirit, by Reflection on your paſt Follies, and long Abuſe of God's Patience, waiting to bring you to Repentance.

Be wiſe yet, before it be too late; God ſtill waits to be gracious, with a *Turn ye, turn ye: Why will ye die?* I have ſurvived Forty Thouſand that are all periſhed in theſe Quick-ſands, and am only ſpared for your ſake, to hang out my Experience for your Light, to warn you all from deſperately adventuring farther in the ſame wicked Courſe. Be not deceived, abuſed Mercy will turn to Fury: Never pretend to be *Lovers of your Country*, *Church men*, or *Loyal Subjects*, till you reſolve to be *Chriſtians*, and *good Men.*

For it is moſt certain, Rebels to God and their own Conſcience, *can never be* good Subjects, or true Friends: *And it is as certain, our holy Religion* (the beſt Support of Monarchy, and the ſureſt Bulwork againſt Popery) *is (with the Goſpel it ſelf) equally uncapable of ſuffering, but from the* vicious Lives and Immoralities of ſuch wicked Members, *who thereby expoſe themſelves as the vileſt Criminals on Earth, and Objects of God's eternal Diſpleaſure.* I ſhall now briefly ſpeak

Of the Doctrine and Diſcipline of our *National Church:* The chief Cauſe and Continuance of *Separation* from it, ariſes from the Scandal of ſome of our *Clergy*, and the Immorality of ſome of our *Members*; which is the Caſe of the *Goſpel it ſelf.* The Removal of this Offence, is the proper *Medium* for *Uniformity*, as the only Means to unite us all againſt our *Common Enemy.*

OF this Matter, I humbly beg leave to ſpeak plainly the Sentiments of my own Mind, without Flattery, or Railing, or giving juſt Offence to any.

Our *Religion eſtabliſhed* commands and approves of all that is excellent, and praiſe-worthy; it forbids and condemns all that is evil; exciting moſt powerfully to an holy, exemplary Life.

It eſteems all external Mode, Form, and Geſture, to be but the Cruſt and Shell of Divine Worſhip: It lays no more ſtreſs on any Rite and Ceremony, than only Decency and Order require. Nei-

ther could I ever find those Members of our Communion, who might truly deserve the Name of Pillars of our Church, so fond of any thing that was indifferent, but they could most willingly part with it, to purchase Union with their Dissenting Brethren; if desired in such a manner, and to be done in such a way, as may preserve Unity and Peace in the Church.

Our Doctrine and Discipline manifestly disclaims all Superstition and Idolatry, as most abominable; and (to the shame of such ill Members) is defective in nothing but *good Living*; which *(none can deny)* is the Case of the Gospel it self: Therefore the greater Woe is pronounced against them that thus scandalize it, by giving Offence to others, or expose it with prejudice to any.

We are blessed with a great Number of pious, learned, and reverend Fathers and Pastors: But, *hinc illæ Lachrymæ*, we have had too many others, (and I wish it were more laid to heart,) that have caused our Religion to be evil spoken of. And we know who said it; *Woe be to them by whom such Offences come.*

I pray God grant, all that take upon themselves that high and holy Calling, *may so qualifie themselves for it, and so regulate their Lives, according to the* Examples of those I first mentioned, *that by* a pious, humble, *and* blameless Conversation, *(the most* powerful living Preaching,) *they may put to silence those Adversaries who are too apt to take* causeless Offence, and make a great Matter of it, *where little is given; that they may thereby remove that* Prejudice, *which the* Miscarriages *of some of their Brethren have created in the Minds of too many towards our* Discipline *and* Worship; giving them occasion, *not only to* separate *from us, but even to reproach our* Religion, *as countenancing such* Enormities. This would wonderfully contribute towards so desirable a Blessing, as *Uniformity* and *Harmony in Divine Worship.*

Of the great Evil in bad Examples of *Magistrates*, *Parents*, and *Masters of Families*; and from their Neglect in their Duty.

AND in order to so great and publick a Blessing as *Harmony in Divine Worship*, (for the Foundation must be laid in a Reformation of Manners,) it highly concerns you *Magistrates* and *Rulers*, as God's Vicegerents, to consider your Duty, both high and low, in every Quality and Degree; and even you *Parents* and *Masters*, as well as publick Officers; for you are every one, in his *peculiar Province*, as a *God* here below, set up and appointed in his stead, to punish and discountenance Evil Doers, and to defend and encourage them that doe well.

And

And where by evil doing, you give *bad Examples*, it aggravates your Crime ten fold; and you ſhall aſſuredly anſwer for all the *Evil* which thereby you give occaſion, or encourage others to commit.

And you may be alſo aſſured of this, that where you are remiſs, or negligent, to exert your Power and Authority, *to hinder Vice and Wickedneſs in others, it is equally the ſame, and you ſhall be accordingly judged, as if you had commanded or countenanced it.* Qui non vetat peccare, cum poteſt, jubet.

It is you muſt *reform* the Age we live in, and aſſiſt the *Government* we live under: The *Truſt* in you repoſed, is a *great*, a *ſacred Talent*, for which you muſt account, as under a ſtrict *Obligation* to *God* and *Man*, to be juſt and faithful therein.

It is from a Neglect in you, that our *good Laws* are trampled under foot, and rendred uſeleſs, at a time when there is more need than ever of their due Execution.

That *Publick Houſes*, at firſt deſigned for *Conveniency*, in *Moderation* on *lawful Occaſions*, are now erected, multiplied, (and as it were *conſecrated*) to be *Shops* and *Nurſeries* of *Prodigality* and *Intemperance*, and *Seminaries* of *Debauchery* in all *Diſorder* and *Impiety*.

That our Streets do ſwarm with the worſt of Vermin, *Shop-lifts*, and *Pick-pockets*, lewd *Ballad ſingers*, *Rioting* and *Ribaldry*; and (which is now become our common Nuſance,) with *Beggars* in the *Day-time*, and in the *Night* with the *Spawn* of the Bottomleſs Pit, thoſe Drabbs called *Night-walkers*, *Panders*, *Pimps*, and *Common Drunkards*, with innumerable Thieves, as the Product of all, in aiding, receiving, abetting, or conniving. All this ariſes, encreaſes, and continues through your *Neglect*.

It is alſo from your *Neglect* that ſuch numberleſs Troops of Infernal Agents, *Bullies*, *Cheats*, and *Gameſters*, the Locuſts of our Age, are peaceably ſuffered openly to frequent all Publick Places, in the diſguiſe of Gentlemen, to have free and undiſturbed Opportunities, as *Inhabitants* and *Reſidents* amongſt us; and by all their ſubtle Arts and Inſinuations, do corrupt and debauch our Youth, as well in *Schools*, as *Families*, eſpecially the *Univerſities* and *Seminaries* of the *Law*; as alſo *Servants* (Male and Female,) *Apprentices* and *Caſhiers*, to diſpoſe and diſcipline them by all the Lures and Baits of Pride, Pleaſure, Gaming, Drunkenneſs, and Wantonneſs, to defraud, filch, purloin, and at length deſperately to betray their Truſt, by downright Robbery. Picking of Locks, Falſe Keys, and Counterfeit Bills, and all the ways wherein the Devil inſtructs thoſe Agents, to bring them to ruine.

And as by *Luxury*, *Prodigality*, and *Intemperance*, men thus conſume their Eſtates, loſe their Credit, and become deſperate in their Fortune,

Fortune, they from thence (as naturally as Effects hold of Causes) turn *Gamesters*, *Cheats*, *High-way-men*, *House-breakers*, *Horse-stealers*, and such like *Caterpillers*, to devour and destroy; associating themselves into Cabals and Parties in their several Divisions, (as it were) the *Banditi* of the Kingdom.

Nay, we so far exceed other Nations in *bare fac'd* and *daring Wickedness*; that whereas they allow only of secret *Stews* and *Brothel-Houses*, we have innumerable open Shops, (as Warehouses of Hell,) where impudent Strumpets expose themselves as the Devil's Nets, to catch their weak and silly Prey, having their Factors abroad (those *Bullies* and *Hectors*) in disguise of Gentlemen, to inveigle young and old to those Chambers of Death.

If the Laws made by our prudent Ancestors against these Enemies of Mankind, That all Persons, Lodgers, and Inmates, that live high, fare well, wear a garb of Persons of Quality, and are suspected to spend above their Income, as having no certain visible Estate, or other lawful ways to support their Expences, shall give an account to Magistrates, what they are, from whence they come, and how they live, and from time to time find Sureties for their good Behaviour; how many of these Evils might be removed and prevented?

If the Laws made in all those Cases, as also against the Profanation of the Lord's Day, (the Spring and Source of all these Evils,) were duly put in execution, this would be the most effectual Means to cause an universal Reformation of Manners, and secure us at home and abroad against our secret and foreign Enemies.

But this Reformation must begin from your own Pattern and Example.

Therefore especially remember, you are intrusted, as God's Representatives; and the best way is for every Man to begin at home with himself, to reform that which will inevitably ruine *all*, if continued a little longer, and leave the succeeding Generations a Wilderness of salvage Beasts, whose Blood will lie at your doors, for from hence spring all the Evils I have already spoken of.

That Masters and Heads of Families, when they should be at home sober Patterns and Examples to Children and Servants, with their Family, offering up their Morning and Evening Sacrifice to the God of their Being; even for them to be then consuming their Time, as well as Substance, abroad in Coffee-Houses, and other publick Houses, leaving their Children and Servants obnoxious to all the snares may be laid for them by the Devil and his Agents. This is a

Matter

Matter deſerves the conſideration of all, eſpecially ſuch as are under ſo great Obligations to reform it.

The putting of a ſtop to theſe growing Evils, is the only Means to reſtore a ſober and induſtrious Education of Youth, under ſober Tutors, Maſters, and Inſtructers, by ſevere Diſcipline, the only Foundation whereon to raiſe the ancient Glory of the *Britiſh Iſle*, in a ſtock of ſuch Natives of our own, as by prudent ſteerage of the Helm at home, and Martial Conduct abroad, may again give Law to all the World.

And to deal plainly, if you impartially examine your ſelves, you will find all this Neglect proceeds from the Poiſon of *Self-Love*, as being blind towards your ſelves, and afraid to look home, and too forward to cenſure others.

And that makes you partial, and ſway'd with Intereſt or Affection, like old *Eli*, too gentle in reproving your Relations, or afraid of your Superiors; unwilling to diſoblige your Friends, and too apt to gratifie your Neighbors, Cuſtomers, or your Tenants; and it may be, loth to puniſh in another, what you are guilty of your ſelf. Thus it will be when our Love to God, the Spring of all our Happineſs, is turned on our ſelves, the Fountain of all Evil: Then Governors, appointed by God to be his Deputies for the good of their Inferiors, turn Renegadoes, and act in the Devil's Work, to the inevitable Ruine of Poſterity, whoſe Puniſhment hereafter will be anſwerable to their Crime, if they eſcape (as ſeldom they do) their Portion of Shame and Miſery here.

But that which ſhould be the greateſt grief (though few lay it to heart) is the Diſhonour done to God, and the Scandal done to our Religion, from ſuch groſs Neglect, and evil Practices in the Profeſſors of it.

From hence, it is manifeſt, our Adverſaries on all ſides take occaſion by their venemous Tongues, and the virulent Pens of mercenary Knaves, and Scriblers, in printed Libels and railing Pamphlets, maliciouſly and falſly to charge the pureſt, and beſt eſtabliſhed Religion in the World, with ſuch Immoralities and execrable Treaſons, as have been hatched in ſecret, by the moſt flagitious Villains and Traytors.

It argues little Charity for our Religion, or Kindneſs for us, at this time a day, in ſo publick a manner to blemiſh the ſetled Doctrine, and Diſcipline of our National Church, with ſuch ſide-wind Reflexions, as if it countenanced, or allowed the Words or Actions of ſome deſigning Knaves, (who can be of any Perſuaſion,) and ſome profligate Villains, the proper Tools of ſuch Knaves,) who have given themſelves the Name of Church-of-England-Men; *but are indeed of no Religion at all, and have been really concerned in the late damnable Plot, or do diſpute whether*

there

there be any such Plot or no, as if our Doctrine or Discipline instructed them therein.

Christian Charity, without Reflexion, would rather have concluded; (as our Religion teacheth;) That sincere Christians will ever be Loyal Subjects, Honest Men, and Good Neighbors. But Rogues will be Rogues in all Climates; and designing Knaves and Time servers, will be Hypocrites and Traytors in all Perswasions.

What Mercy can we expect at the Hands of these Men, (were they but arm'd with Power,) who thus publickly arraign and explode, not only our National Church in general, but also such Persons, whose Piety and Meekness in the whole Tenour of their Lives, (especially under their late Trial,) *might have obliged their worst Enemies, in Silence, to bewail them in their present Condition, and leave them to stand and fall to their own Maker; at least, to a more charitable Opinion of them, than thus rashly to charge them,* as Betrayers of our Laws, Liberties, and Religion; nay, of the whole Kingdom, by inviting the most barbarous, tyrannical Disturber of *Christendom* to accept it.

This is far from Love *of* Truth, Christian Zeal, *or* Loyalty *for their* Majesties now in the Throne: *But we may (with more Charity) conclude it to be done at this juncture, on purpose to* expose our Religion, and all its Adherents, *so as thereby to excite, and enrage the credulous and ungovernable Multitude (who are easily imposed upon) against them,* as Authors of all the Miseries and Calamities we now groan under, *as a ready way to set us all in a Flame, even now that we stand in most need of Union.*

When God knows, they that are thus censorious, *and* rash *in* judging, *may have had as great a share (as any) in the procuring Cause. I speak my own Mind plainly, as apprehending it my Duty; for should I be unconcerned, when I hear my innocent Mother publickly slandered and exploded, I should declare my self worse than an Infidel.*

But all this still proceeds from the same Original Fountain, *and* Poison *of* Self-Love.

This would be no Riddle, if Men would first look home, *and* judge themselves; *for Men of all* Persuasions *are so ready to blame others, before they do this, that they are too apt wholly to excuse themselves, with the* Pharisee, I thank thee, O Father, I am not as this Publican.

But the right way of Judging, *is (as I have said before) to trace our Misery to its Cause, and from thence look up to him that appoints the Instruments of our Punishments, and can remove or change them at his pleasure.*

Now

Now let us consider the Third and last, but the most *sublime and subtil sort of* Moral Idolatry; *or*, The great Danger and Evil of *Ambition* and *Worldly Design*, under the Vizor of Zeal for *Reformation*; and of *Liberty of Conscience* and the great Abuse of it.

'Tis true, *as God Almighty hath various Ways and Methods to reform and discipline his Children, according to their various Tempers and Dispositions; so the Devil, by his Janizaries*, Designing Hypocrites, *and* Time-servers, *who can readily take any Impression in Religion, be of two or three persuasions at once, to promote their own* Interest, *puts himself into various shapes, and baits his Hook with various Objects, suited to mens different Inclinations, that he may catch both* Pharisee *and* Publican; *as well the* spiritually proud, *as the* Debauchee, *that no Fish may escape his Net, and (if it were possible) the Elect too should be cheated by him.*

Thus he baits the Luxurious *with* Pleasure, *the* Avaritious *with* Riches, *and the* Ambitious *with* Pride, Dominion, *and* worldly Design.

When he designs to subvert a Kingdom, or overthrow a Government, he doth not appear immediately in Arms *and* open Hostility; *but first under a* Disguise *of* Zeal *for* Reformation, *which he generally prosecutes, by removing all* Foundation *laid in the* first Principles *of* Religion; *and then proceeds to create various* Opinions *in the Minds of honest and well-meaning Persons, of easie and credulous Dispositions; continually raising* Niceties *and* Scruples, (*before any* Foundation *be laid in* fundamental *Knowledge of the first Principles of our* Religion, *contained in the* Lord's Prayer, *the* Ten Commands, *and the* Creed,) *and those* Niceties *and* Scruples *are more and more irritated by* subtil *and* designing Teachers, *under a* Disguise *of* Liberty *of* Conscience.

God forbid Liberty *of* Conscience (*if regulated by the Standard of the* Scriptures) *as it is the Birthright of every Christian, should be denied to any that in sincerity desire it, to live peaceably under the* Government in all Godliness and Honesty; *because many persons of honest and well-meaning Principles, may, from their* Education in Foreign Parts, *or in Families of* different Persuasions, *either misapprehend, or not rightly understand the Truth of our Doctrine and Discipline established among us.*

And many others, in the simplicity of their Hearts, when they see the vicious Lives *and* Actions *of some of our Members, or the* Scandal *of some of our* Clergy, *in things that are open and manifest, may*

be ſo impoſed upon, by Jeſuitical Whiſpers *on the one hand, and* private Intruding Teachers, *on the other hand, as to imagine that our Religion eſtabliſhed, muſt either countenance or allow of ſuch Evils in the Profeſſors of it. Which (as I have already ſaid) is the Caſe of the Goſpel it ſelf.*

Now foraſmuch as our Government is founded in the Law of God and Nature, and our Religion eſtabliſhed, is ſettled and framed from no other Standard or Original but God's revealed Will in the Scriptures, and ſo both may be a juſt Standard for all other Governments. *It muſt therefore be a Strain of great Arrogance and Preſumption in any State-Mountebank to propoſe any Foreign Preſident for alteration of either.*

And to ſilence all Complaints but theirs, whom nothing leſs than All will ſatisfie, As our Religion *and* Government *ſo eſtabliſhed, do allow a peaceable and innocent* Liberty of Conſcience, *the Grand Charter of Chriſtianity it ſelf; (which we have found by experience, no other differing Perſuaſion but ours, would ever allow any longer than they wanted power to reſtrain it;) ſo none can deny it to be both prudent and juſt in the* Government, *(from the Law of* Self-preſervation,) *to take care of, and ſecure it ſelf againſt all abuſe of ſo great a Bleſſing, by ſuch, who have* pure Religion *only in their* Mouths, *but the rankeſt Poiſon of* Ambition *and* Worldly Deſign *in their* Hearts; *making no Scruple (as Opportunity offers) to devour Widows Eſtates, as well as the Houſes and Patrimony of them and all others, to make way for their own* Ambitious Deſigns; *For we find it moſt certainly true, by woeful experience, that* it is impoſſible to ſecure any Government in the World on a laſting Foundation, but by annexing it with the Religion eſtabliſhed, ſo as to make them inſeparable, according to the Policy of *New-England*; *(where* Liberty of Conſcience *firſt planted their* Law-makers.) They that do not firſt approve of, and embrace our Religion eſtabliſhed, ought to have no ſhare in our Government.

But ſuch as would come into the Government *on other Terms, have* Liberty of Conſcience *only in their* Mouths, *but* Ambition *and* worldly Deſign *in their* Hearts; *which they carry on by multiplying Sects under ſeveral Leaders, (each ambitious to be Head of his own Party,) who, by their influence on credulous and well-meaning Perſons, encloſe them, as in ſo many* Peculiars, *each Paſtor to encline and lead his own Flock; the only Method to divide, and conſequently to weaken both the Government and Religion eſtabliſhed; That whenever their Intereſt is in danger, they may eaſily (as hath been practiſed in like caſes) by the ſame Art, diſpoſe all to unite (for the ſame end) againſt the Government they live under.*

And thus one and the ſame common (though inviſible) Enemy of Mankind, putting himſelf into various ſhapes, and baiting his Hook with proper Objects, ſuited to mens various Inclinations and Diſpoſitions, (which

all centre in Self-love,) can first divide and weaken, and again unite to destroy the best Religion *and* Government *in the world; though the designing Party are ever lurch'd in what they aim at, which is* Dominion *and* Rule.

For no sooner is any Party gotten uppermost, but the same Principle of Ambition and worldly Design animates the rest (that are under) to supplant *that, in order to advance themselves into the* Government; *so that their whole* Babel *of* Designing *and* Contriving, *ever ends in* Anarchy *and* Confusion; *which hath caused many of their* Chief Builders *(convinced by their own woeful experience) at last to acknowledge their* Error, *and to declare, That* to seek a Kingdom in this world by carnal Means *and* Weapons, is no true Badge of the Blessed Redeemer's Followers.

What clearer Demonstration can we have that there is always such a Designing *Party at the Bottom, under the most specious Vizor of* Zeal for Reformation, *and* Liberty of Conscience, *than to see those who pretend to the greatest* Purity *and* Sanctity *(though of several Persuasions) all to unite, and diligently apply themselves to such* Patrons *and* Leaders, *whose Interest and Influence may best promote their Design, though they all know them to be of no Religion at all; nay, such as are guilty of the greatest* * Immoralities; *who can thunder out bloody Oaths without reluctancy, and make use of their Power and Interest to oppress others, and engross the Widow and Orphans Estates. Such Men as these, are proper Objects of all the Courtship and Address of those consecrated Politicians; for they well know they are adapted for their Turn, who readily prostituting their Conscience to their Interest, can be most serviceable to their ambitious Designs, And as they are Favorites in the highest station, so they are capable of the greatest Acts of Oppression and Injustice therein, (by alienating the Hearts of Subjects,) they may contribute more to dethrone a Monarch, or subvert a Government, than Ten Thousand Armed Men; especially as these designing Hypocrites manage it to their own advantage; who, though they always carry the flattery of a Loyal All-hail in their Mouths; yet by secret Trumpets in every corner they arraign the Prince himself, as Author of all Acts of Injustice and Oppression, done by such his Ministers, to render Monarchy uneasie to the People; and at the same time, with no less industry, both in publick and private, expose the most Faithful and Loyal Counsellors and Magistrates, who are most true to the Church and Government, and the very Pillars and Security of the Throne, as Betrayers of their Country, their Laws and Liberty; rendring them odious to the Prince and People, that they may remove them, in order to get Champions and Agents of their own Faction, into all Places and Offices of Trust and Power in the Government,*

This discovers plainly that the Patrons and Clients are both governed by one and the same Principle of Self-Love, *which ebbs and flows with their own Interest, the vital part of their Religion, and so disposes them to divide or unite against that which opposes their Designs, and at length to quarrel among themselves about* (*what they all aim at*) Dominion *and* Rule.

The Result of all which may be this; to put us upon a

Modest Enquiry.

WHat Endeavors have been made by all the *Separate Congregations* in general, towards an *universal Reformation* of *Manners*, and *Allaying our Heats*, to *heal* our *Divisions*, in order to Union among our selves; the only Means under Heaven, to secure us in these perilous times against our *Foreign Enemy*.

And wherein *Christian Charity* and *Purity of Life* (farther than in cheap and easie fruit of the Lips) hath appeared in *Dissenters*, or those that separate from our *National Communion*, and pretend to *Extraordinary Call* and *Conversion*, so as to distinguish them by any visible *Change* in their Lives and Conversation, from those of our *Communion*, who live according to the *Doctrine* and *Discipline* of our Church, or from what they themselves have ever before been in their Life-time.

And also what visible Effects the late *Indulgence* granted to *Dissenters*, hath wrought for the better, in procuring more *meek*, *humble*, and *peaceable Spirit*, or abating *Pride*, *Murmuring*, or *Discontent*; railing against, and censuring of others, (even among their own Party,) in order to heal our Breaches, and compose our Differences.

Nay we may modestly enquire, whether the Scope and tendency of all endeavours in the *Leading Party* among them, hath not been more after *Dominion* and *Rule* here below, than to advance the *Kingdom of Christ* in the Hearts of Men? And in order to that, whether they have not, with the greatest Subtilty and Partiality improved their *Factories* and *Agency* by humane Policy, to direct, order, or influence the choice of Magistrates and Officers in every Colony among us, from whence the greatest Heats and Disturbances have arisen, let the visible Effects speak for themselves?

And

And when we have ſo done, we may (from the Hiſtory of the laſt Age) reflect upon that *happy Union*, which continued among Proteſtants, in this Kingdom, in the open Practice of *Piety*, *Sobriety*, and *Righteouſneſs*, from the firſt time of the *Reformation*; but eſpecially during the forty four years of Queen *Elizabeth*'s Reign, when all (as one Soul) joyfully and conſtantly aſſembled together at the ſet times appointed by the Church, to celebrate *Divine Service*, and hear the *Scriptures* daily read, as the only Means to keep up a *venerable Awe and Senſe of the Majeſty* of God in the World, and in the Mind of every individual perſon, and to maintain and increaſe *Chriſtian Charity* and *Brotherly Kindneſs*, (the alone *Medium* of *Union* in a Kingdom,) as being all fully perſuaded in their Mind, it was a Service moſt acceptable to God, without any other Diſcipline, or way of Worſhip than what had been ſo ſetled among us by thoſe Pious and Learned *Martyrs* (the Founders of it,) who carried their own Faggots, (*not loving their Lives unto death*,) to bear their Teſtimony for it.

By which means that happy Queen ſo long reigned in Peace, (by Love,) in the hearts of all her Subjects, and a *Terror* to all her Enemies; whereby our *National Church* became the Envy of *Rome*, and the only Sanctuary for all *Diſtreſſed Proteſtants* abroad.

All this plainly demonſtrates, That pure and undefiled Religion, *founded in* Piety, Sobriety, *and* Righteouſneſs, *may be eaſily known of all, as it conſiſts in* Humility, Self-denial, *and* ſincere Practice *of what we know, (all epitomiz'd in* good Living,) *and not in* profound Knowledge, needleſs Diſputes, long Prayers, or fruitleſs Diſcourſes.

If theſe things were laid to heart, ſo as to be well weighed and conſidered by all *ſincere* and *well meaning Chriſtians*, who now ſeparate from our publick Communion, into private Congregations, that from thence they might be awakened, to examine, and (with me) ſeriouſly enquire into the Truth of things, they would ſoon find how miſerably they have been impoſed upon, and drawn into prejudice, and an ill apprehenſion of the *pureſt* and *beſt eſtabliſhed Religion* on the Earth, by ſuch deſigning Leaders as can be contented to ſacrifice the Peace and Safety of the whole Kingdom, to promote the Intereſt of a Party, in order to gratifie their own *Ambition* and *Worldly Deſign*, though under a Diſguiſe of *Liberty of Conſcience*; when in truth by Separation from us, they do but exchange one *Shell of Religion* for another; for ſo I reckon, (and ſo our Church doth eſteem) the moſt refined Diſcipline, or outward Way of Worſhip to be; and lays no more ſtreſs in it than Decency and Order.

Order requires: Therefore it is no wonder that the moſt Ignorant, and Short-ſighted, and ſuch as look no farther into Religion than the *outward Appearance*, but are never capable of diſcerning the *Vital Subſtance*, ſhould, from the Scandal of ſome wicked Members, (from which the *Goſpel* it ſelf was not wholly exempt,) be ſo apt to deſpiſe our eſtabliſhed Diſcipline, and yet at the ſame time idolize another Form, or Way of Worſhip; as if God were more pleaſed with one *Shadow*, than another.

Whereas we eſteem our outward Diſcipline no otherwiſe than as outward Means, compoſed and adapted by the moſt pious and learned Men, from the ſacred Fountain of the Scriptures, ſuited to every Capacity through a whole Kingdom; the leaſt knowing, as well as the moſt learned; that all may joyn together. In which, the *pious*, and *well-diſpoſed* Chriſtian may worſhip God in the *Beauty of Holineſs*; and the *Youth* and *Ignorant*, as with a Leading-ſtep, may be trained up, from the firſt Principles of Religion, to the greateſt Perfection; and whereby alſo the *Profane* and *Looſe* are, by a venerable Authority, influenced and reclaimed, at leaſt kept within ſome Bounds, from *ſcoffing* at *Religion*; which is daily occaſioned by the Separation of ſuch who are ſtill ſubject (with their Neighbours) to the ſame Infirmities attending Humane Frailty, as well as to *Pride*, *Ambition*, *Self-Love*, (in the inordinate Love of the World,) *railing at*, and *cenſuring* of others, and yet puffed up with a falſe Conceipt of their Way, do herd and diſtinguiſh themſelves under their ſeveral *Leaders*, into ſo many and various *Ways*, *Opinions*, and *Perſuaſions*; (I wiſh it were not ſo near a Reſemblance of the ſeveral Orders in the Church of *Rome*;) and all under conduct of their peculiar Guides.

From whence it comes to paſs, that vain and looſe Perſons, beginning firſt with light Thoughts of Religion, and by degrees declining the publick Prayers of the Church, and private Family-Duties; and from thence giving ſcope to boundleſs Luſts, at laſt caſt off all Religion, and become downright *Debauchees*, and *practical Atheiſts*.

This may ſatisfie any but ſuch as are in love with a falſe Perſuaſion, and beforehand reſolved to know no better, that the Offence is taken, and not juſtly given, by thoſe that thus ſeparate from our National Communion; eſpecially when they may be all ſo clearly convinced, that the original Cauſe of Separation from the Communion did not ariſe from any thing either in our Doctrine, or the Diſcipline of our Church, but from what was acted by Temporal Rulers, (as they were ſteered by *Jeſuites*, and *Popiſh Intereſts*,) in Eccleſiaſtical Courts, procuring a Toleration of *Sports* on the *Lord's Day*; and Indulgence to be granted in other Matters, which

our

our holy and pure Religion expreſly condemns and abhors; which could not but be very offenſive to many honeſt and well-meaning Perſons; eſpecially when ſo induſtriouſly improved by ſubtile *Jeſuits*, and whiſpering *Sectaries*, (the ſecret Enemies of our Church,) who inſinuated into the Minds of the Eaſie and Credulous, that our Religion did countenance ſuch Evils, and thereby drew them into *ſeparate Congregations*; whereby they had opportunity to introduce ſo many *ſtrange Doctrines*, and variety of *Perſuaſions*, the *Seed* and *Cauſe* of all our *Heats*, *Diviſions*, and *Animoſities*, on the one hand; and of *practical Atheiſm*, *Debauchery*, and *Immorality*, on the other: Both which, (as groſs *Hypocriſie*, and *bare-fac'd Impiety*,) do equally expoſe us to the Divine Vengeance, and lay us open to our foreign Enemies. For it is moſt plain, the *Enthuſiaſtick*, as well as the *Debauchee*, when thwarted in their Deſigns, have an equal Tendency to *Rebellion* and *Treaſon*.

I ſay, were ſincere, (though miſ-perſuaded,) well-meaning Perſons but once fully ſenſible of theſe great Truths, and of the unavoidable Neceſſity of their returning into our *Communion*, as the only Means left to unite and ſave us, by reſtoring *True Piety*, and *Chriſtian Charity*, in *Sobriety* and *Righteouſneſs*, among us, it is impoſſible they ſhould ſleep quietly one Night, before they returned into this *Boſom* of Safety: For (God knows) I fear there is no other *Cure* left for our univerſal Diſtemper; and it is high time to begin ſo happy a Work.

Wherein their *Leaders*, if they have (as they all pretend to have) the Spirit of *Primitive Chriſtianity*, may (as faithful in God's Vineyard) outſtrip all our *idle Labourers* in painful and powerful Preaching; and eſpecially, by their exemplary and holy Living, ſo influence their Doctrine on the Mind, as to reclaim many profane Perſons, who now take occaſion, from their Separation, into ſo many Forms and Shadows of Religion, to inveigh, and rail againſt them all.

And the *Lay-Members*, if they return into our Communion, and live up to what our holy Religion (which is defective in nothing but *good Living*) doth moſt plainly and powerfully teach, may boldly reprove, (by our *Church-Authority*,) and put to ſilence many open Tranſgreſſors, and *Evil Doers*, who now take occaſion, from ſo many Faſhions of Religion among us, to deride and ſcoff at all Religion in general; and alſo (to their great Comfort) may thereby ſhame a ſcandalous Clergy-man into a Reformation of his Life, by ſaying, (with the Spirit of Meekneſs,) in the Language of the holy Prophet, *I have more Underſtanding than all my Teachers; for thy Teſtimonies are my Meditation*, Pſal. 119.

And

And this (I bear witneſs) is countenanced by all our reverend and pious *Fathers* and *Paſtors*, who would have *all to come to the Knowledge and Practice of the Truth*, and who it is moſt manifeſt) are willing and ready to comply with any thing that may tend to heal our Breaches, and to purchaſe *Union* with their *Diſſenting Brethren*, if deſired in *ſuch a way*, and to be done in *ſuch a manner*, as may preſerve *Peace* and *Unity* in the Church.

Which we can never reaſonably hope ſhould be done, without ſome *orderly Application* of ſuch as muſt own themſelves *inferiour* to thoſe whom the Government (under which they live) have made their *Superiours*; which nothing can hinder, or obſtruct, but *Pride*, *Obſtinacy*, or *Worldly Deſign*; all which are directly contrary to the *meek*, *yielding*, and *ſelf-denying* Temper of *Primitive Chriſtianity*.

And here I may, with an humble Confidence, inforce this Argument from the *greateſt Example*, and the moſt *excellent Pattern*; even that of His *Sacred Majeſty*, now in the *Throne*, the *Head* of *our Government*, and *Chief* of *our Communion*; whoſe incomparable *Perfections* (whether we conſider Him as a *Man*, or as a *Chriſtian*) are ſufficiently known to the *whole World*.

WHO, to give us the cleareſt Evidence of his *Zeal* and *Sincerity*, hath expoſed himſelf to the greateſt Dangers, for Defence of the *Reformed Religion*. And though his Education was in a *different Perſuaſion*, (the *Diſcipline eſtabliſhed* in his native Country,) yet, to demonſtrate both his *Piety* and *Prudence*, when he had ſearched into, and was fully ſatisfied, that the *vital Part* of that *Religion* wherein he was bred, and the Doctrine here taught in our *National Church*, was one and the ſame, he was neither *tenacious* in his own *Opinion*, nor bigotted to the outward *Form*, or *Perſuaſion* (which is but the *Cruſt* and *Shell*.)

But (as beſt became the Head of his People) he, together with his *Royal Conſort*, (as one Soul,) do openly profeſs our *eſtabliſhed Religion*; the greateſt Bleſſing Heaven could beſtow, if we know our Happineſs. And Oh that all His Majeſty's Subjects would reſent it accordingly.

And farther, I might urge another eminent Inſtance in His *Royal Highneſs* the *Prince of Denmark*, whoſe Education was moſt ſtrict in the *Lutheran Church*, (the eſtabliſhed Religion of that Kingdom,) where the Diſcipline is as different from that of the *Calviniſts* in *Holland*, as ours is from both; and yet, from the ſame *Chriſtian Principle*,

Principle, founded in the vital Subſtance of *Truth* and *Goodneſs*, and not wedded to the *Shell* and *Shadow*, finding the pure Doctrine ſtill the ſame, he joyns himſelf with His Sacred Majeſty, in the ſame Communion.

Who both, during their late Expedition abroad, in the defence of their Religion and Country, have conſtantly, in a devout manner, offered up their Morning and Evening-Sacrifice at the *publick Prayers*, according to the Diſcipline eſtabliſhed in our Church.

From whence we may appeal to all impartial Chriſtians herein, whether ſuch as are *Natives* of our own Country, and *Fellow-Subjects* with us in one Kingdom, and do all pretend to hold *Unity* in Doctrine with the *Reformed Churches* abroad, and with us too, in our *National Church*, and can ſo readily conform to the *Faſhions*, *Garb*, and *Attire* of the preſent Age, and are apt enough to inſiſt on the leaſt *minute Particle* of Precedency (with the reſt of Mankind) in *Honour*, according to Order and Decency in *Temporal Government*; yet are ſo *tenacious* in their *Opinion*, and wedded to their own outward Form, or *Shadow* of *Divine Worſhip*, as, by a continued Separation, to *ſacrifice* our Religion, and the *Peace* and *Safety* of our Government, our *Laws*, our *Liberties*, and our *Lives*, as a Prey to our *Foreign Enemies*, rather than, with thoſe moſt *Illuſtrious Perſons*, and many other *eminent modern Inſtances*, (who were all as ſtrictly bred in different Perſuaſions, under Foreign Governments,) to *embrace that holy and pure Religion*, ſo here eſtabliſhed and ſetled among us, from the firſt Reformation, by thoſe *pious* and *learned Martyrs*, the *Founders* of it: I ſay, whether this *Stiffneſs* and *Obſtinacy* doth not ariſe from *Ignorance* and *Prejudice* in the Honeſt and Well-meaning, who are *ſeduced*, and *impoſed upon*, from *Self-Love*, *Ambition*, and *worldly Deſign* in the *Leaders* and *Seducers*, rather than from any *pure Principle* of Primitive Chriſtianity, I leave all Perſons concerned herein, to be themſelves Judges of the Matter.

But after all, I would be ſo underſtood, that I do not deſign, in the leaſt, by any thing I have here ſaid, Abridgment or Reſtraint of that *honeſt*, *innocent*, and *peaceable Liberty of Conſcience*, (of which I have already diſcourſed,) which we muſt allow to be the *Chriſtian's Birthright*.

And now, from all, we may (with humble Submission) draw this most certain *Conclusion.*

THat the true *Christian Religion*, according to the Doctrine and Practice of our blessed Redeemer, the Founder himself, must be laid in sincere *Humility* and *Self-denial*; both centring in the pure *Love of God*, (from which Man fell,) which we call *Charity*: This cannot be hid, but naturally (like the Sun) darts forth its Influence, in *Love* to *our Fellow-Creatures*, causing us to love as God loves, for Goodness-sake; and from thence, to love *our Neighbour as our self*; which is directly opposite to *Concupiscence*, or *Self-Love*, the Fountain of all Evil.

And such a Religion as this (and no other) will make *good Princes*, and *good People*; *good Ministers*, and *good Magistrates.*

This is such a Religion alone, as will inspire our *Councils* with *true Wisdom*, and our *Armies* with *true Courage*, and *good Conduct*; and unite us all, as *Christian Brethren*, *Members* of one *mystical Body*, and of one *National Communion*, as best becomes Subjects of *one Kingdom*; so as to be at one within our selves, by preventing all *home-bred Divisions*, which will most certainly secure us against all *Foreign Force*; when with Comfort we may truly say, *God being with us, who can be against us.*

And now I appeal to all impartial Christians, of what Persuasion soever, that have so examined and tried, as to be competent and capable Judges of Truth herein, Whether any *established Religion* on the Face of the whole Earth comes so near this Standard, as that of *our National Church.*

O blessed and happy forty four Years Reign of that *Maiden Queen*, in *Piety*, *Sobriety*, and *Righteous Dealing* one towards another, in *Harmony* of Hearts, and *Divine Worship*, without the least *Blending*, or *Mixture* of any other *way of Worship*, *Discipline*, or *Teacher*, but what was so ordained, setled, and established from the Standard of the holy Scriptures, in this our *National Church*, by those *pious Founders*, and *holy Martyrs*, our triumphant *Witnesses*, *now with God.*

And last of all, to the end these my *weak Endeavours* may prove successful, I shall close the *Lay-man's Religion* with one *Prayer* contained in our *Liturgy*, and a few brief Paragraphs out of the *Litany* of our *established Discipline*, as a farther part of that Standard, so suited to all Capacities, that all may see our Charity extended to the whole Race of Mankind, without partial Regard, either to *peculiar Inclosures*, or *Exclusion* of any. And so I do most humbly beg all that love and fear God, (as they cast their Eye with an impartial

Mind

Mind on theſe Lines) to joyn with me in humble Prayer to Almighty God herein:

O *God, the Creator and Preſerver of all Mankind; We humbly beſeech thee for all Sorts and Conditions of Men, That thou wouldſt be pleaſed to make thy Ways known unto them, thy Saving Health unto all Nations: More eſpecially we pray for the good Eſtate of the Catholick Church, That it may be ſo guided and governed by thy good Spirit, that all who profeſs and call themſelves Chriſtians, may be led into the way of Truth; and hold the Faith in Unity of Spirit, in the Bond of Peace, and Righteouſneſs of Life. Finally, We commend to the Fatherly Goodneſs all thoſe who are any ways afflicted or diſtreſſed in Mind, Body, or Eſtate; That it may pleaſe thee to comfort and relieve them according to their ſeveral Neceſſities, giving them Patience under their Sufferings, and an happy Iſſue out of all their Afflictions. And this we beg for Jeſus Chriſt his ſake.* Amen.

Againſt *Worldly Deſign* and *Debauchery*, the Sin of the *Profeſſor* and the *Profane*, as the two Extreams that poiſon and choke all *Religion* and *Morality*.

FRom all *Blindneſs of Heart*: From *Pride*, *Vain Glory*, and *Hypocriſie*: From *Envy*, *Hatred*, *Malice*, and all *Uncharitableneſs*.

From *Fornication*, and all other *deadly Sin*: From all the Deceipts of the *World*, the *Fleſh*, and the *Devil*.

From all *Sedition*, *Privy Conſpiracy*, and *Rebellion*; From all *Falſe Doctrine*, *Hereſie*, and *Schiſm*: From *Hardneſs of Heart*, and *Contempt* of thy *World* and *Commandment*,

Good Lord deliver us.

For Univerſal Peace and Charity; and for Grace, and Guidance of God's Spirit, that we may ſerve him acceptably, with Reverence, and Godly Fear.

THat it may pleaſe thee to give all Nations *Unity*, *Peace*, and *Concord*.

That it may pleaſe thee to give thy People *Increaſe* of *Grace*, to *hear meekly thy Word*, and to receive it with *pure Affection*, and to bring forth *the Fruits of the Spirit*.

That it may pleaſe thee to bring into *the Way of Truth* all ſuch as have *erred*, and are *deceived*.

That it may pleaſe thee to *forgive* our *Enemies*, *Perſecutors* and *Slanderers*, and to turn their Hearts.

That it may pleaſe thee to give us *true Repentance*, to forgive us all our *Sins*, *Negligences*, and *Ignorances*; and to endue us with the *Grace* of thy *Holy Spirit*, to amend our Lives according to thy *holy Word*.

We beſeech thee to hear us, good Lord.

To conclude:

The ill Management of our Tongue, or the bad Husbandry of our Time, will render the beſt Religion vain.

A Word briefly of Each: And Firſt, Of the Tongue.

I *Muſt add one Ingredient more, as a principal Part of the* Layman's Religion; *without which, all External Profeſſion of Religion is but a* Shadow: *For which I have a very good Authority*; If any Man among you ſeem to be religious, and bridleth not his Tongue, he deceiveth his own Heart, and that Man's Religion is vain, *Jam.* 1. 26.

The Tongue *is Man's* peculiar Glory, *and was originally deſigned to enable him to praiſe God, and benefit Mankind*; *as we find it exemplified in the Man after God's own Heart*: Awake up my Glory: I will give Thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the People, I will ſing unto thee among the Nations; ſo will I teach Tranſgreſſors thy Ways, and Sinners ſhall be converted to thee. *This is the juſt Inference of the Son of* Syrach, *in* Eccleſ. The Lord hath given me a Tongue, and I will praiſe him therewith.

And as God deſigned in Creation, every thing ſhould anſwer the End of its Being, *ſo we have here an infallible Teſt to try all our* Words *and* Diſcourſes: *And we may be aſſured, whatever part will not anſwer one of theſe two primitive Ends of Speech, either to glorifie God, or benefit Mankind, will not hold weight in the Balance of the Sanctuary.*

Therefore let as to Day (even from this moment) hear his Voice, and no more harden our Hearts herein. God hath placed in every Man an inward Check, as a Rein upon his Tongue; though too many wiſe and ſober Men frequently wound themſelves by their too ready compliance with others (as Opportunity offers) to barter Vice and Folly herein. How often have

they

they forc'd themselves against this inward Caution; either to fabricate, or to relate filthy and frothy, if not obscene, or profane Stories, Jests or Squibs, to obtain the Honour of a Fool in the Play, by diverting and pleasing the sinful and easie Inclination of others, in that which is not only barren and unprofitable, but oftentimes sinful and offensive to tender and chaste Organs; and ends, at last, in some overt sinful Act. How excellent Advice have we from the Apostle, to shun this great Evil, Eph. 4. 29. Let no corrupt Communication proceed out of your Mouth, but that which is good, to the use of edifying, that it may administer Grace to the Hearers: And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby we are sealed to the Day of Redemption.

The prudent Management of the Tongue, hath in all Ages been accounted the most excellent Part of humane Perfection: And herein St. James *seems to allow Perfection in this Life.* If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole Body.

But how degenerate is the Age we live in? How far short do we come herein of many of the pious Heathen of old, who made the Fruit of this Noble Member of the Tongue the chief part of their Hospitality for entertainment of their best Friends, in the Communication of the Divine Life, *as more suitable Food, and purer Nourishment for their immortal Souls, than to eat and drink together like Hogs in the same Trough, or Horses in the same Manger.*

I may adventure to speak it, (though it be a hard Saying,) if we should measure God's Friends (by this Standard) in mens Words and Discourses in Conversation, the Devil will have Twenty for One that appears on God's part; which plainly demonstrates that many are called, *but* few *are* Christians.

I pray God all that read this Paper, may seriously consider this great Duty; and tremble to think of the dreadful Account must be made of this great Talent *of the* Tongue, *to which we owe so much, both of our* spiritual *and our* secular *Advantages; that for the future they may set a strict Watch before the door of their Lips, so as to endeavour all they say may answer one of these two Primitive Ends of Speech, either to* glorifie God, *or* benefit Men.

Well might St. *James* say, Life and Death are in the Power of the Tongue, *when the Mouth of Truth it self had before pronounced the Sentence:* By thy Words thou shalt be justified, and by thy Words thou shalt be condemned.

The Tongue is the Helm, by which the Soul of Man steers the whole Course of his Conversation among Men: It is so voluble a Member, that it needs not so much as the flexure of a joint, and often moves without giving us any Warning; and as Children easily set those rolling Engines in Motion, which stronger Men cannot suddenly stop; so when our

Mind

Mind (which is the Pilot of our Tongue) wanders abroad, and leaves this unruly Engine at liberty, our Paſſions and our Fancies (which are the Childiſh Parts of our animal Nature) are too apt to ſet our Tongues into ſuch a looſe Carier of Folly and Babling, as our Reaſon cannot eaſily reſtrain it. Therefore David, *to prevent this great Evil*, ſaid, *Pſal.* 39. I will take heed to my ways, that I offend not with my Tongue. I will keep my Mouth as with a Bridle, while the Wicked is before me. *And that he might do it effectually, he fixed his Mind at home, in Contemplation of his own frail Mortality*; My Heart was hot within *me*, whilſt I was muſing (*thus inwardly intent*) the Fire (*vehement thoughtfulneſs*) burnt within me; then ſpake I with my Tongue: Lord make me to know mine end, and the meaſure of my days, what it is, *that* I may know how frail I am.

How can the Tongue be worſe employed, or the Speaker rendred more odious, than in railing at, and cenſuring others, when at the ſame time he himſelf may be guilty of that, or worſe Crimes, which might have been buried with him in Silence, had he not thus provoked others to blazon them to the World.

Qui alterum cuſat prori, ipſum ſe ntueri oporn.

But all proceeds from Self-love, in being partial to our ſelves, and cenſuring others, before we look home and judge our ſelves.

For though Men may imagine their Words vaniſh with their Breath which utters them, they may be aſſured they are all recorded with God, and ſhall be produced hereafter, as Witneſſes for, or againſt them. Therefore let them carry in their Memory this ſhort Caution to be in all Companies their Monitor.

Remember God hears, and writes down
All things that Men do ſay;
And every idle Word ſhall be
Accounted for one Day.

Of the right Improvement of *Time*; or, the great Evil of Procraſtination, or deferring our Duty.

Many are gone to their Place, with a too late *Repentance*, though they daily renewed their *good Purpoſes*. To the end therefore thoſe that remain, may no longer harden their Hearts, but *While it is called to day*, may (by a better Obedience) *hear his Voice*,

Voice, I ſhall conclude with a *brief Diſcourſe of the great Evil and Folly of* Procraſtination; *or deferring our Duty from the preſent (which is our certain) to a future uncertain Seaſon:* The putting off this Day's Work till to Morrow. *This, like ſubtile Poiſon, kills inſenſibly, not perceived, till 'tis incurable.*

OF all the Follies incident to Man, there is nothing more natural, or more deſtructive to him, than to defer the preſent opportunity of doing what he ſhould do, either out of a lazy indulgence to ſloth, or with a deſign of doing that which is leſs profitable, or perhaps really injurious to himſelf or others; ſo ſtupid and inconſiderate, as if the heavieſt load were moſt eaſie to carry, when the Body is moſt indiſpoſed. The Work of Life is appointed us at our entrance, and no part of our time our own; ſo that when we leave the leaſt Duty undone to day, the beſt we can hope for (if we live) is to double our diligence to morrow; *Hodiè operanti, crâs levius opus.* Time is ſo precious, that the loſs of the leaſt moment can never be recovered: All that can be done towards it, is to ſpend what is to come better. This Life is wholly in order to another; and *Time* is the ſole opportunity *God* hath given us, for tranſacting the great buſineſs of Eternity. Our Work is great, and our *Day of working* ſhort; much of which alſo is loſt and uſeleſs, through the *Ignorance and Inadvertency of Youth*, and the *Diſeaſes* and *Infirmities* of *Old Age*. Our Portion of Time is not only ſhort, as to its duration; but alſo uncertain in the poſſeſſion. The loſs of it is irreparable to the Loſer, and profitable to no body elſe; it ſhall be ſeverely accounted for at the great day of Judgment. Then certainly if ſuch a thing as the Philoſoper's Stone may be found, it conſiſts in giving *Time* and *Seaſon*, as well as other Creatures their due, and doing every Day's Work within it's compaſs, (which the beſt find but ſhort to do it well,) and not put off any part of this Day's Duty till to Morrow; which hath already the proper Work of it ſelf, appointed by him whoſe Day it is. We cannot know (the leaſt moment before) what additional Task our Lord may appoint to Morrow; which may be ſuch as may require our utmoſt capacity. *Sufficient for the day is the Evil thereof*, in all its Circumſtances. The preſent Inſtant alone is ours; our Health and Strength may fail, as well as Opportunity; but our corrupt Inclinations are too apt to increaſe; ſo as to morrow we may be leſs diſpoſed to our Duty, and too apt again to put off till another Morrow: Nay, we may never have a Day more to work; or be rendred incapable of working more. *Qui non eſt hodiè, crâs minus aptus erit.*

I can-

I cannot have a better Tutor than the *Roman Perſeus*, inſtructed by Natures Light, on this Subject; though it is a ſhame ſo many who pretend to be Leaders of the Blind in Goſpel-Light ſhould come ſo far ſhort of what he taught in the practice of his known Duty.

Cras hoc fiet; idem cras fiet: quid? quaſi magnum
Nempe diem donas? &c.

To Morrow we'll do this: Alas, you'll do
The ſame to Morrow, Why ask we of you
So much? To wit, One only Day; but when
The Third Day comes, we have conſumed then
To Morrow, Yeſterday; and thus to borrow
Of time, though yet to come, ſtill on to Morrow,
Will ſecretly drive out our time at laſt,
When ev'ry Day, a new Day will be paſt,
Never to be recall'd; for thou, O Wheel!
Which doſt about the ſecond Axle reel
Hind-moſt may'ſt ſtrive in vain for to o'retake
The fore-moſt turning forward, which doth make
Like haſte, with equal ſpeed, although thou be
Hard by it plac'd, under the ſelf-ſame Tree,

12° Die Martii, Anno Libertatis, Gratiâ ſpeciali mihi abundante, reſtitutæ, 10.

POST-

POST-SCRIPT.

IT might have been expected from ſuch a Title as *The Lay-man's Religion*, that I ſhould have begun with ſome Preface, by way of Apology, for preſuming to treat of any thing ſacred: Therefore as I have already propounded my end, and ſhall leave what I have written, to ſhew Cauſe why; ſo it becomes me here in the cloſe, to tell the World more plainly what hath induced me hereunto, and my Deſign therein.

In the firſt place, I do moſt humbly acknowledge my own Incapacity, to trace many things in this ſmall Treatiſe to their Original: And that whatſoever I have thus compoſed and publiſhed, relating to the Doctrine and Principles of Religion, or Man's Duty, is no more mine, than as I have collected, digeſted, and regiſtred it in my own Mind, from the Works and Labours of pious and learned Men, who prepared, and handed it down to me and others, for the common Good of Mankind. Wherein I have forborn to quote the Authors Names, whoſe Words and Senſe I have ſo made uſe of, to the end, wholeſome Truth (which ſufficiently commends it ſelf to a Mind well qualified) may not be leſs welcome to an impartial Reader, though conveyed down by Meu of different Perſuaſions, which hath been the Fate of many excellent Treatiſes, among ſuch as are too apt to have Men's *Perſons*, rather than their real worth *in admiration*; not conſidering, that the moſt refined are but *earthen Veſſels*, when the *Treaſure* is (in all) ſtill the ſame.

When I beheld (to my great Grief,) the generality of Diſſenters, though ſcarce acquainted with the Fundamental Truths of Chriſtianity, and having no more knowledge of the Doctrine and Diſcipline of our Church, than from the falſe and malicious Reports of our Enemies; yet puffed up with an high conceipt of the excellency of their own Way; and wilfully tenacious every one in their own ſeveral Perſuaſion; and ſo prepoſſeſſed with prejudice againſt this our eſtabliſhed Religion, that they were ſo far from reading, that they rather deſpiſed all that hath been written, in Tenderneſs and Love for their inſtruction, by the moſt reverend and learned Clergy of our Church; ſaying, It was only done to promote their own Trade and Intereſt; I could no longer bear with ſuch Affronts and Indignities, to be openly caſt upon Truth it ſelf, leſt I might by my ſilence be-

come guilty of that, which I did not endeavour (as much as in me lay,) to hinder.

And therefore, in obedience to the Dictate of my own Conscience, having with an impartial Mind searched into the Truth of all, so as to be rightly informed, and fully perswaded in my Mind; (neither imposed upon, or influenced by any Party;) I judged my self under the highest Obligation to God and Man, as a proper Witness for Truth, to publish to all the World, what God hath been graciously pleased thus to make known to me: Solemnly appealing to the Searcher of all hearts, 'tis done, to the best of my Understanding, Knowledge, and Belief, purely for discovery of Truth, and for the Good of Men's Souls in all Perswasions.

And as my whole Design herein hath been; so it shall be my hearty Prayers and Endeavours to stem the Tide of Debauchery and Immorality, which threatens universal Desolation to the present Age, and Ruine to Posterity; and (as the best means to effect that) to promote Charity, and Brotherly Kindness among all that make Profession of Christianity; that they may so live and act, as to keep their Conscience void of Offence towards God and towards Man; the only *Medium* to render Religion amiable, thereby to promote, and restore that Harmony in Divine Worship, which, for so many Years, rendred our Nation the *Goshen* of the whole Earth; a Blessing (if well understood), most desirable in all Nations.

Waller.

Could we forbear Disputes, and practise Love,
We should agree as Angels do above.

Self-Love *would cease, or be dilated, when*
We should behold as many Selfs *as Men:*
All of one Family in Blood ally'd,
His precious Blood, *that for our Ransome dy'd.*

Love *as he* lov'd, *who left his Glorious Seat,*
To make us humble, *and to make us great:*
This Iron Age, *so fraudulent and bold,*
Touch'd with this Love, *would be an Age of* Gold.

The End of the First Part.